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23 August 1968

July

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Done for  
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Briefing

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Austrian State Treaty

1. The State Treaty of 15 May 1955, which became effective on 27 July 1955, granted Austria independence and provided for the prompt withdrawal of the troops of the four occupying powers (the USSR, the United States, the United Kingdom and France) who also guaranteed the sovereignty of the Austrian State. An additional undertaking was embodied in the Neutrality Act of October 1955, a statute having the force of a constitutional amendment, which commits Austria to enter into no military alliance and to permit no foreign bases on its territory. The Austrians claim that since the latter Act was a unilateral measure on their part, they shall be the sole interpreters of their neutrality. They have turned aside the efforts of the Soviet Union, as a treaty guarantor, to interpret Austrian neutrality.

2. The Treaty provides for the calling of a conference of the guarantors in the event of a violation of the treaty's principles. Such a call has never gone out, but Austrian officials have worried that Moscow might take advantage of this protested "German interference" in Austrian affairs.

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